

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0010

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 7448

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, IT

SUBJECT: MY VISIT WITH BRUNO STORTI, SECRETARY GENERAL CISL

1. BRUNO STORTI, SECRETARY GENERAL CISL, CALLED ON AMBASSADOR JULY 26 FOR LENGTHY DISCUSSION COVERING POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL QUESTIONS.

2. STORTI WHO WITH CGIL AND UIL TRADE UNION LEADERS HAS BEEN CARRYING ON DIALOGUE WITH THE NEW CABINET MINISTERS CLEARLY STATED HIS CONVICTION THAT THE RUMOR GOVERNMENT MUST LAST AND UNIONS MUST REFRAIN FROM ATTEMPTING TO BRING IT DOWN. THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD CONTINUE FOR SEVERAL YEARS IN ORDER TO PUSH THROUGH TO COMPLETION REFORMS SO ESSENTIAL FOR ITALY'S PROGRESS. MORE IMPORTANT THAN A CONSTANT SEARCH FOR A PERFECT REFORM IS THE IMPERATIVE NEED TO ACTUALLY LEGISLATE AND FOLLOW THROUGH ON SPECIFIC REFORM MEASURES. ACCORDING TO STORTI THE CGIL AND SOME CISL LEADERS ARE RELUCTANT TO GIVE THE GOVERNMENT MUCH MORE THAN A 100-DAY GRACE PERIOD FREE FROM CRITICISM BUT THEY HAVE ACCEPTED, TO SOME EXTENT, STORTI'S ARGUMENT THAT 100 DAYS ARE NOT SUFFICIENT FOR TRADE UNIONS TO PROPERLY EVALUATE THE GOVERNMENT.

2. ALONG THIS LINE STORTI STATED THAT THE PCI FACES A DILEMMA. IF THE PCI GIVES THE RUMOR GOVERNMENT TIME AND THE GOVERNMENT PROVES SUCCESSFUL IN ITS INITIAL ATTEMPT TO SLOW INFLATION, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD THEN BE WELL ESTABLISHED AND COULD UNDERTAKE TO PUSH THROUGH SEVERAL NEEDED REFORMS (HEALTH, SCHOOLS, ETC.). THE NEED FOR PCI

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BACKING AND PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT WOULD IN THIS CASE LACK

URGENCY. ON THE OTHER HAND IF THE PCI IS OBSTRUCTIONIST AND FRUSTRATES GOVERNMENT EFFORTS, THE SUBSEQUENT FALL OF THE GOVERNMENT COULD MEAN EARLY ELECTIONS OR A MOVE BACK TOWARD THE CENTER, NEITHER OF WHICH NOW IN PCI INTEREST. IN NO CASE CAN THE PCI LOOK FORWARD TO EARLY PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT. IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS CHAOS DOES NOT SUIT PCI STRATEGY AIMED AT ITS EVENTUAL ENTRY INTO THE GOVERNMENT BUT TOO MUCH ORDER AND SUCCESS FOR RUMOR WON'T MAKE THEM HAPPY.

3. STORTI SPOKE OF THE ALWAYS-PRESENT ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CRISIS IN ITALY'S SOUTH AND OF THE GRAVE POSSIBILITY THAT CONCOMITANT WITH ECONOMIC UPTURN IN THE NORTH WILL COME A FINAL MIGRATION OF SOUTHERN WORKERS RESULTING IN THE DEATH OF THE SOUTH. THIS MIGRATION MUST BE PREVENTED BY INVESTMENT IN THE SOUTH, NOT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY WHICH HAS RESULTED IN FEW JOBS AND LITTLE MULTIPLIER EFFECT, BUT SERVICE AND RESEARCH-ORIENTED ENTERPRISES WHICH COULD TAP SOME OF THE SOUTH'S UNDERUTILIZED MANPOWER. TWO SERIOUS PROBLEMS ARISING PARTIALLY FROM PAST MIGRATIONS HAVE BEEN A RISE IN ABSENTEEISM AND WORKER MILITANCY. FORMER AGRICULTURAL WORKERS OFTEN ADJUSTED POORLY TO FACTORY DISCIPLINE, RESULTING IN ALIENATION AND MILITANCE. THIS MILITANCE HAD REPERCUSSIONS IN THE TRADE UNIONS, PRIMARILY THE CISL SINCE MILITANT YOUTH COULD NOT ACCEPT CGIL AND PCI DISCIPLINE.

4. IN THE INTERNATIONAL SPHERE STORTI LAMENTED THE AFL-CIO DEPARTURE FROM THE ICFTU POINTING OUT THAT AFL-CIO PARTICIPATION HAD BEEN ESSENTIAL TO GIVE THE ICFTU WORLDWIDE RATHER THAN EUROPEAN CHARACTER. THE AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT FORMER CLOSE AFL-CIO/CISL RELATIONSHIP COULD BE REBUILT. STORTI HEARTILY CONCURRED. VOLPE

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